Message Text

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 01 LIMA 05151 01 OF 02 122205Z ACTION ARA-14

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-05 H-01 INR-10 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 SP-02 SS-15 ICA-11 IO-13 HA-05 AID-05 TRSE-00 OMB-01 /092 W -------035728 122224Z /61

P 122107Z JUN 78 FM AMEMBASSY LIMA TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 436

CONFIDENTIAL SECTION 1 OF 2 LIMA 5151

E.O. 11652: GDS TAGS: PINT. PE

SUBJECT: MEETING WITH BODOYA REYES

REF: (A) LIMA 5986; (B) LIMA 5045

SUMMARY: AMBASSADOR AND POLITICAL CONSELOR MET WITH PPC LEADER LUSI BEDOYA REYES AT OUR REQUEST EVENING OF JUNE 8 TO DISCUSS ELECTORAL PROSPECTS AND REITERATE US SUPPORT FOR POLITICAL TIMETABLE AS AMBASSADOR HAD DONE PREVIOUSLY WITH APRA LEADER HAYA DE LA TORRE (REF A). BEDOYA BELIEVES THAT ELECTIONS WILL BE HELD JUNE 18, ESPECIALLY IN VIEW OF GOP'S DECISION TO LIFT RESTRICTIONS ON CAMPAIGNING (REF B). HE ASSERTED THAT HIS PPC AND APRA WILL BE ABLE TO COME TO AN AGREEMENT FOR MANAGING THE CONSTITUENT ASSEMBLY (ALTHOUGH SOME PROBLEMS REMAIN IN THIS AREA), AND CONTENDED THAT THE ELECTORAL TIMETABLE WILL PROBABLY BE MOVED FORWARD TO PERMIT INSTALLATION OF AN ELECTED CIVILIAN GOVERNMENT BY MID-1979. PRIME MINISTER MOLINA HAS DISCUSSED WITH BEDOYA VARIOUS WAYS IN WHICH THE POLITICAL PARTIES CAN PLAY A ROLE IN GOVERNMENT DUR-ING THE ASSEMBLY AND PURPORTEDLY SUPPORTS ACCELERATING THE TIMETABLE TO 1979. END SUMMARY.

1. PPC DEALINGS WITH THE GOVERNMENT. BEDOYA REVEALED CONFIDENTIAL.

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 02 LIMA 05151 01 OF 02 122205Z

THAT HE HAD TWO LENGTHLY MEETINGS RECENTLY WITH PRIME MINISTER MOLINA, AT THE LATTER'S REQUEST, THE LAST ON JUNE 3. MOLINA, WHO BEDOYA FOUND INTELLIGENT, GOOD NATURED AND WELL PREPARED, SOUNDED OUT BEDOYA ON THREE POSSIBLE POST-CONSTITUENT ASSEMBLY ELECTION ARRANGEMENTS TO ASSIST THE TRANSITION TO CIVILIAN RULE.

-- ESTABLISHMENT OF A MIXED CIVILIAN-MILITARY

CABINET CONSISTING OF 6 CIVILIANS (3 HAVE ALREADY BEE APPOINTED), 6 MILITARY, PLUS THE 3 SERVICE CHIEFS. BEDOYA RESPONDED THAT IF THE APPOINTMENTS ARE SIMPLY "TECHNICIANS" CARRYING OUT THE MILITARY GOVERNMENT'S PLANS, HE COULD SEE NO PARTICULAR MERIT IN THE PROPOSAL. A TRULY MIXED CABINET DESIGNED TO DOMONSTRATE A SHARING OF POWER WITH THE CIVILIAN SECTOR WOULD REQUIRE THE APPOINTMENT OF OUTSTANDING INDIVIDUALS WHO COULD STAND UP TO THE MILITARY. HE MENTIONED FORMER FINANCE MINISTER PIAZZA AS AN EXAMPLE. BEDOYA, WHILE COMPLIMENTARY ABOUT LANATA AS THE NEW INDUSTRY-COMMERCE MINISTER, DISMISSED FINANCE MINISTER SILVA RUETE AND FOREIGN MINISTER DE LA PUENTE AS SIMPLE "BUREAUCRATS" WHO ADMINISTER THE MILI-TARY GOVERNMENT'S POLICIES. BEDOYA SUGGESTED TO MOLINA THAT THE REAL MOTIVE FOR BRINGING IN THREE MORE CIVILIANS WAS THE PROBLEM OF DISTRIBUTING MINISTRIES SO AS TO KEEP THE THREE MILITARY SERVICES REASONABLY CONTENT.

--ESTABLISHMENT OF A CIVILIAN ADVISORY COMMISSION MADE UP OF PARTY REPRESENTATIVES IN PROPORTION TO THEIR RELATIVE STANDING IN THE ASSEMBLY. THE COMMISSION WOULD DEVELOP POLITICAL-ECONOMIC-SOCIAL "RECOVERY PLANS" FOR THE COUNTRY TO BE IMPLEMENTED BY THE NEW CIVILIAN GOVERNMENT AND WOULD ASSURE THAT ACTIONS BY THE MILITARY REGIME IN THE MEANTIME WOULD BE IN LINE WITH THE RECUPERATION PROGRAM. BEDOYA SAID THIS IDEA WAS WORTH CONSIDERING IF SOME WAY COULD BE FOUND TO LIMIT PARTICIPATION OF THE CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 03 LIMA 05151 01 OF 02 122205Z

SPLINTER PARTIES, PARTICULARLY THE EXTREME LEFT. SINCE THE COMMISSION, ACCORDING TO MOLINA, WOULD HAVE FULL ACCESS TO ALL INTERNAL GOVERNMENT INFORMATION, BEDOYA SAW A RISK THAT EXTREMISTS MIGHT USE THIS AGAINST THE MAJOR PARTIES AND THE GOVERNMENT IN THE ENSURING GENERAL ELECTION CONTEST.

--ESTABLISHMENT OF A MIXED CIVILIAN-MILITARY COMMISSION, AGAIN WITH PROPORTIONAL POLITICAL REPRESENTATION, WHICH WOULD FUNCTION LIKE THE EXISTING COAP (ADVISORY COMMITTEE TO THE PRESIDENT), REVIEWING THE MILITARY REGIME'S DECREE LAWS. BEDOYA SEEMED LESS ENTHUSIASTIC ABOUT THIS PROPOSAL THAN THE PLANNING COMMISSION SCHEME. WHEN ASKED ABOUT AP'S ROLE IN THESE COMMISSIONS, BEDOYA SAID BELAUNDE HAD TOLD HIM HIS PARTY WOULD NOT PARTICIPATE.

2. MOLINA TOLD BEDOYA HE AGREED THAT THE ELECTION SCH-DULE SHOULD BE MOVED UP TO PERMIT THE TRANSITION TO CIVILIAN RULE IN 1979, INDICATING THAT THE MILITARY ARE ANXIOUS TO GET OUT. BEDOYA TOLD HIM THAT THE PPC OPPOSED MORALES BERMUDEZ'S LEGITIMIZATION AS INTERIM PRESIDENT BY THE ASSEMBLY AND MOLINA REPORTEDLY SAID THE ARMED FORCES WOULD NOT PERMIT IT. (HAYA ALSO TOLD THE AMBASSADOR THAT THIS IS NOW A DEAD ISSUE.)

3. ON THE QUESTION OF THE EXTREME LEFT, MOLINA ASSERTED THAT THE RECENT DISTURBANCES DEMONSTRATED THE SUBVERSIVE THREAT THE LEFT REPRESENTS. BEDOYA ARGUED THAT FROM A POLITICAL POINT OF VIEW, THE EXTREME LEFT IS MANAGEABLE BUT IF THE GOVERNMENT PROHIBITS ELECTED LEFTISTS NOW IN EXILE OR HIDING FROM TAKING THEIR SEATS, IT WILL LEAD TO A CONFRONTATION BETWEEN THE ASSEMBLY AND THE GOVERNMENT. HE ASSERTED THAT THE FEW EXTREMISTS LIKELY TO BE ELECTED COULD EASILY BE CONTROLLED BY THE ASSEMBLY ITSELF. (BEDOYA GIVES THE UDP AND FOCEP ONLY ONE SEAT EACH IN THE ASSEMBLY, WITH PERHAPS FIVE OR SIX FOR THE PSR.) CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 04 LIMA 05151 01 OF 02 122205Z

BEDOYA SAW IN MOLINA'S COMMENTS A HINT THAT THE GOVERNMENT KNOWS WHERE PSR LEADER GENERAL RODRIGUEZ FIGUEROA IS HIDING BUT HAS CHOSEN THUS FAR NOT TO CAPTURE HIM.

CONFIDENTIAL

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CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 01 LIMA 05151 02 OF 02 122215Z ACTION ARA-14

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-05 H-01 INR-10 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 SP-02 SS-15 ICA-11 IO-13 HA-05 AID-05 TRSE-00 OMB-01 /092 W -------035797 122223Z /61

P 122107Z JAN 78 FM AMEMBASSY LIMA TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 437

CONFIDENTIAL SECTION 2 OF 2 LIMA 5151

4. THE ELECTION AND THE ASSEMBLY. BEDOYA PLANS TO RESUME HIS CAMPAIGN WITH RALLIES IN LIMA JUNE 13 AND CALLAO JUNE 15. HE DID NOT OFFER AN ASSESSMENT OF PPC'S CHANCES AGAINST APRA BUT IMPLIED THAT THE RACE SHAPES UP AS CLOSE. AFTER THE JUNE 18 ELECTION, THE PPC IS PREPARED TO WORK OUT AN AGREEMENT WITH APRA FOR THE MANAGEMENT OF THE ASSEMBLY AND THE TRANSITION TO GENERAL ELECTIONS. PPC REALIZES

IT MUST NEGOTIATE FROM A MORE MODEST POSITION IF IT FINISHES BEHIND APRA BUT, ON THE OTHER HAND, EXPECTS APRA TO ACCEPT THE REVERSE RELATIONSHIP SHOULD PPC TAKE THE LARGEST VOTE. BEDOYA SAID HIS PARTY WILL OFFER HAYA THE PRESIDENCY OF THE ASSEMBLY, EVEN IF THE PPC WINS, AND WITH NO STRINGS ATTACHED IN TERMS OF THE GENERAL ELECTIONS. HOWEVER, APRA MUST DROP ITS DEMAND TO INCORPORATE INTO THE NEW CONSTITUTION TWO OF HAYA'S PET PROJECTS, I.E., THE DEFINITION OF PERU AS A STATE OF "MANUAL WORKERS AND INTELLECTUALS" AND THE ESTABLISH-MENT OF AN ECONOMIC CONGRESS AS THE FOURTH BRANCH OF GOVERNMENT. BEDOYA ASSERTED THAT APRA LEADERSHIP (WITH THE EXCEPTION OF LUIS ALBERTO SANCHEZ) SUFFERS FROM "HARDENING OF ITS INTELLECTUAL ARTERIES" AND IS FROZEN IN TIME IN 1945. HE DID INDICATE HIS CONCERN OF A POSSIBLE LEFTWARD MOVE IN APRA (GENERALLY ATTRIBUTED TO ARMANDO VILLANUEVA) AND RECALLED THAT WHILE APRA IS ANTI-COMMUNIST, IT STILL EMBRACES ELEMENTS OF MARXIST CONFIDENTIAL.

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 02 LIMA 05151 02 OF 02 122215Z

THINKING. HE ALSO NOTED BELAUNDE'S ASSERTION THAT HAYA WOULD EVEN DEAL WITH THE COMMUNISTS IF IT WOULD GET HIM THE ASSEMBLY PRESIDENCY. (INTERESTINGLY, BEDOYA SAID HE HAS NEVER MET HAYA PERSONALLY, ATTRIBUTING THIS IN PART TO A CUTTING REMARK HE MADE ABOUT THE APRA LEADER ON TV DURING BEDOYA'S MAYORALTY CAMPAIGN IN 1963.)

5. AS TO THE FUNCTIONING OF THE ASSEMBLY ITSELF, BEDOYA BELIEVES IT CAN COMPLETE ITS WORK IN FOUR TO FIVE MONTHS. HE PROPOSES THAT A COMMISSION DO A DRAFT OF THE NEW CONSTITUTION AND THEN SUBMIT IT FOR REVIEW TO WORKING COMMITTEES BY CHAPTER, I.E., ECONOMIC, SOCIAL, GOVERNMENT STRUCTURE, ETC. HE SAID THE PPC IS THINKING ALONG THE LINES OF THE FRENCH CONSTITUTION WITH A STRENGTHENED EXECUTIVE, A DIRECTLY ELECTED HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES AND A SENATE ELECTED INDIRECTLY BY THE MUNICIPALITIES. ILLITERATES WOULD BE PERMITTED TO VOTE ONLY IN LOCAL (MUNICIPAL) ELECTIONS. BEDOYA WOULD ALSO LIMIT PLENARY SESSION PUBLIC DEBATE DURING THE ASSEMBLY TO ONE DAY A WEEK. THE ASSEMBLY COULD COMPLETE ITS WORK BY THE END OF THE YEAR, GENERAL ELECTIONS COULD BE CONVOKED IN JANUARY 1979 AND THE NEW GOVERNMENT COULD TAKE OFFICE BY JULY 1979. BEDOYA IS ALSO INTERESTED IN SPEEDING UP THE POLITICAL SCHEDULE BECAUSE HE BE-LIEVES THE ASSEMBLY AND ITS LEADERS WILL BECOME PUBLICLY IDENTIFIED WITH THE UNPOPULAR MILITARY GOVERNMENT AS TIME PASSES. THIS COULD HURT THE MAJOR PARTIES IN THE GENERAL ELECTION AND BENEFIT THE EXTREME LEFT AND THE AP. BEDOYA COMMENTED THAT BELAUNDE STILL ENJOYS PERSONAL RESPECT IN THE COUNTRYSIDE, BUT NOT NECESSARILY SUPPORT

FOR HIS REELECTION. BEDOYA CONTINUES TO SEE MANUEL ULLOA, FINANCE MINISTER UNDER BELAUNDE, AS A MAN TO WATCH IN PERUVIAN POLITICS. HE BELIEVES ULLOA IS CONFIDENTIAL.

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 03 LIMA 05151 02 OF 02 122215Z

MANUEVERING TO OBTAIN APRA'S SUPPORT FOR HIS PRESIDENTIAL CANDIDACY, THAT PROSPECT HAVING OPENED BECAUSE OF HAYA'S ADVANCED AGE AND THE APPARENT LACK OF OTHER CANDIDATES AMONG THE APRISTA.

6. WHEN DISCUSSING THE ELECTION PROCESS, THE AMBASSADOR REITERATED STRONG US SUPPORT FOR THE ELECTORAL SCHEDULE. HE EMPHASIZED THE HIGHEST PRIORITY THE CARTER ADMINISTRATION ASSIGNS TO HUMAN RIGHTS, AND THE PLAN TO RETURN TO ELECTED RULE AS VERY MUCH IN KEEPING WITH THAT POLICY. BEDOYA APPEARED PLEASED AND SATISFIED WITH THE AMBASSADOR'S STATEMENT. BUT HE ALSO RETURNED TO HIS THEME OF THE NEED AN ELECTED GOVERNMENT WILL HAVE FROM THE OUTSET FOR SUBSTANTIAL USG ASSISTANCE. THE AMBASSADOR SAID WE WOULD WISH TO COOPERATE CLOSELY WITH AN ELECTED GOVERNMENT. HOWEVER, IT WOULD BE IMPORTANT FOR THE NEW GOP TO BE IN A POSITION TO DEFINE ITS DEVELOPMENT PRIORITIES CLEARLY ON THE BASIS OF SOUND PLANNING.

7. COMMENT: BEDOYA WAS HIS USUAL EXPANSIVE AND CONFIDENT SELF DURING THE THREE-HOUR CONVERSATION WHICH TOUCHED A VARIETY OF LESSER MATTERS WE WILL COVER IN A SEPARATE MEMCON. HE APPEARS CONVINCED THAT THE ELECTIONS WILL TAKE PLACE AS SCHEDULED AND IS LOOKING PAST THE ASSEMBLY TO HIS OWN PRESIDENTIAL CANDIDACY, DESPITE THE CONTINUING ECONOMIC PROBLEMS THAT A NEW CIVILIAN GOVERN MENT WILL FACE A YEAR FROM NOW. (ALTHOUGH BLESSED WITH CONSIDERABLE PERSONAL MAGNETISM AND GREAT ENERGY, BEDOYA'S GRASP OF THE ECONOMIC REALITIES PERU FACES APPEARS WEAK.) WE THINK HE MAY BE OVERESTIMATING HIS ABILITY TO STRIKE A SATISFACTORY DEAL WITH APRA, ESPECIALLY IF THAT PARTY MAKES A STRONG ELECTORAL SHOWING.

8. THE MEETINGS WITH GENERAL MOLINA OFFER FURTHER INDICATIONS OF THE KEY ROLE THE PRIME MINISTER IS TAKING CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 04 LIMA 05151 02 OF 02 122215Z

IN THE POLITICAL TRANSITION PROCESS. MOLINA'S ADVISORY COMMISSION PROPOSAL SEEMS TO US TO HAVE SOME MERIT AS A TRANSITION MECHANISM TO GIVE THE ELECTED REPRESENTATIVES

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